

Orleans County Open -- Official PRO Rules 2025

NOTE: Violation of ANY of these rules MAY result in disqualification for the day or the Tournament

1 – CAPTAINS MEETING:

There will be a **MANDATORY** Captains meeting the Friday June 6th. At least one team member is **required to attend**. ANY exceptions to this rule **MUST** be reported to and pre-approved by the tournament director. **Captains meeting will take place at 4pm Friday June 6th after weigh in concludes for the King of the Oak event.**

2 – COMPETITION PARAMETERS:

The Tournament's intent is to fish for two days. Hours of the competition are defined below and shall apply to each day of each event unless altered by the Tournament Director based on inclement weather.

- a) In the event of foul weather, two hours of fishing will constitute a full day. One two hour day will constitute completion of the Tournament.
- b) Teams should be prepared to adjust their schedules to allow for fishing up to 5 PM Saturday, 4 PM Sunday if weather conditions are a factor.
- c) If the first day is completed any time fished on the second day (even if less than two hours) will count towards the day.
- d) All team members and all Registered Tournament Boats are prohibited from returning to the waters of Lake Ontario from the time they cross the pier head day 1 until the designated departure time day 2. Any exceptions to this rule **MUST** be pre-approved by the Tournament Director.

Hours of Competition

- Disclaimers may be turned in starting at 5 AM.
- Upon turning in disclaimers boats may leave their dock and assemble at the point designated at the captain's meeting.
- 5:30 AM shotgun start.
- You **MUST** be in line for pre-check by 3:30PM. There are **NO** exceptions to this rule. Please manage your time carefully.

3 – TOURNAMENT LIMITS:

All team members and registered Tournament boats must enter and exit from Oak Orchard or Bald Eagle Marina.

- a) Tournament fishing is limited to US waters **ONLY**.
- b) Fishing tributaries is prohibited. The Niagara River will be considered a tributary.
- c) It is the responsibility of the team Captain to remain within the Tournament boundaries. Straying outside of Tournament boundaries at any time for any reason is prohibited and will result in disqualification for the day.
- d) Tournament boats are prohibited from all open water boat to boat contact unless it involves law enforcement or an emergency. Any exception must be pre-approved by the tournament director or will result in disqualification for the day.

4 – TEAM STRUCTURE:

Teams are not limited to a maximum number of anglers. All Teams are limited to 3 fishing rods per person but no more than 9 fishing rods in the water at any time. Team Captains are responsible for insuring that the appropriate number of NYS fishing licenses are present on the boat to accommodate Tournament fish and rod limits.

5 - BOAT RESTRICTION AND IDENTIFICATION:

Boat size will be limited to no less than 18 feet. All boats are required to have a working VHS radio and GPS which must be functional at all times as well as USCG regulated safety equipment. Tournament Control will monitor Channel 16 and all boats will be directed to channel 9 for announcements. It is the Captain's responsibility to maintain contact with Tournament Control in the event of foul weather.

6 - CLOSED Communication will be in effect throughout the event. No communication of ANY kind may take place between teams from the start of the day's fishing until boats are inside the pier heads.

7 - WEIGH-IN:

- a) Upon returning to port the cooler containing the days catch must be immediately drained of any water and transported to the weigh-in site.
- b) Any attempt to alter the weight of a tournament fish (excessive soaking, pumping, injecting, etc.) will result in disqualification for the day.
- d) As soon as the cooler leaves the boat it will be considered "sealed". The handling of your fish by anyone other than a Tournament Official is prohibited.
- e) At least one team member must remain with the day's catch until surrendered to the Weigh-in Official. Any exception to this rule must be pre-approved by a tournament official.
- f) Failure to abide by these rules result in disqualification for the day.

8 - COOLERS:

- a) To qualify for scoring, all coolers must return to the harbor in your designated boat.
- b) All coolers must be marked with the team name and number.
- c) All coolers must arrive at the weigh-in free of loose ice and water. ONLY blocks, bagged cubes, and frozen plastic containers are approved.
- d) Failure to abide by these rules will result in removal to the back of the precheck line for correction.

9 - SCORING:

A "limit catch" in this tournament is 10 fish. Of the 10 only 5 may be salmon. The other 5 must be trout but may not include more than THREE lake trout.

10 - Points:

- a) Each Tournament legal Salmon, Brown Trout, or Lake Trout will score 10 points. Rainbow/Steelhead Trout will score 20 points.
- b) 1 point will be scored per pound of fish weighed.

11 - NYS AND TOURNAMENT LEGAL FISH DEFINITIONS:

Steelhead - NYS legal length is 21 inches. Minimum Tournament length is 22 inches. Attempting to weigh-in a Steelhead UNDER 22 inches will result in the loss of the fish from your box. **Attempting to weigh-in a Steelhead less than 21 inches will result in disqualification for the day.**

Atlantic Salmon –NYS legal length is 25 inches. Minimum Tournament length is 26 inches. Attempting to weigh-in an Atlantic less than 26 inches will result in the loss of the fish from your box. **Attempting to weigh-in an Atlantic less than 25 inches will result in disqualification for the day.**

All Other Trout And Salmon –Minimum length is 19 inches. Attempting to weigh-in a fish less than 19 inches will result in the loss of the fish from your box.

This is a CULL tournament however; teams are encouraged to take care in releasing fish. Leaving a bunch of dead fish floating is not good for the fishery or the image of the tournament and will not be tolerated. Please make every effort to revive fish before releasing them. Once a fish goes in the cooler it cannot be culled out.

Certified measuring boards will be used at the weigh-in site. These boards will be present at the Captains meeting for teams to compare their own measuring devices to. This board will be the “OFFICIAL” measuring boards of the Tournament and will be used to determine whether or not a fish is Tournament legal.

12 - PROTESTS, RULINGS AND LITIGATIONS:

- a) Any contestant witnessing a violation of the rules is **required** to IMMEDIATELY report the alleged violation to Tournament Control.
- b) Any suspected violations will be turned over to the Competition Committee for review. This committee will report all information to the Tournament Director. The Tournament Director will attempt to facilitate a resolution of the issue before an Official Protest is filed.
- c) Any Team member has the right to file an Official Protest by completing and signing the Official Protest Form provided by the Tournament Director. This form must be presented to the Tournament Director within 30 minutes of receiving the form. Upon receiving the Official Protest form the Tournament Director will present the protested team with a 15 minute opportunity to resolve the protest. Any unresolved protests will be forwarded to the appropriate Law Enforcement Agency for investigation.
- d) A \$50.00 (fifty dollar) non-refundable protest fee (cash only) must accompany any filed protest form.
- e) The Tournament scores of protested teams will not be considered official, and any awards won by a protested team will be withheld until a complete investigation is finalized.
- f) Failure of any team to cooperate with the Competition Committee or the Tournament Director will result in immediate self-induced disqualification from the event.
- g) THE “SPIRIT” OF THE RULES WILL BE ENFORCED AT ALL TIMES. ALL DECISIONS OF THE TOURNAMENT DIRECTORS WILL BE FINAL.

13 - INSPECTIONS:

All teams must at any time, allow Tournament Officials to board their boat for inspection. All Tournament boats must be available for inspection for the duration of the event. Inspections shall include, but not be limited to, GPS units, fishing tackle and coolers. Failure to comply with an Official’s request for inspection will result in immediate disqualification.

14 - MISCONDUCT:

Any inappropriate, improper or abusive conduct by any participant towards any Tournament Official, volunteer, or fellow participant shall be deemed a violation of the rules and may subject the violator to penalties or

disqualification as determined by the Tournament Committee. Any person or team that has been disqualified by any other Tournament or Derby for an overt act to deceive or defraud may be barred from entry into any future events.

15 - LIABILITY:

Every reasonable precaution will be taken by the Tournament Committee to protect persons and property during the event. However, the Committee, its judges, sponsors, officers, directors, and volunteers or employees of the same will not be held responsible for the safety of persons or property participating in the tournament. All participants further understand and agree to hold harmless members of the aforementioned groups from any liability or claim of damages.

- a) All Tournament boats should carry liability insurance.
- b) Each Contestant will be required to sign a liability disclaimer each morning before the Tournament begins.
- c) We will not leave the harbor under a small craft advisory. If one is put in place during tournament hours each team is at their own discretion.

16 – GENERAL:

- a) All fish will remain the property of the Tournament until released to the teams.
- b) All fish may be tested for legality.
- c) Disposition of all fish is the team's responsibility and must be in compliance with state and local laws.

17 – ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING:

All entrants agree that their purchase of a registration or participation in any of these events shall constitute an acknowledgement of the rules and they further acknowledge that they understand their obligations and responsibilities outlined within and they agree by these rules and the decisions of the Tournament Officials.

NOTE: Violations of ANY of these rules MAY result in disqualification for the day or the event. See specific rules for exact penalties.